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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

762.00/11-1958

FROM : The American Embassy BONN

796

DESP. NO.

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

November 19, 1958

DATE

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SUBJECT: Conversation November 13 with Ollenhauer, Chairman of the SPD, and Menzel, SPD Whip, on Khrushchev speech, Interparty Collaboration and Relations with the Soviet Zone, and Emergency Legislation.

KHRUSHCHEV'S SPEECH. Ollenhauer said it is too soon to be able to judge Khrushchev's purpose and intentions. His speech could be the first step toward a very serious situation although it could be taken for granted that the Soviets will avoid any risk of conflict. The speech probably had several purposes, among them, the strengthening of the satellite system. It seemed probable that this new demonstration of Soviet harshness would work to the advantage of the CDU in current election campaigns. Grotewohl's milder statement was equally puzzling but possibly intended to soften the unexpectedly sharp reaction in the West. Whatever the motivation the outcome might well be that the Soviets would say that their task in Berlin was completed and that they would withdraw leaving it for the Western powers to negotiate with the GDR on problems of access and supply. The GDR might well take the position that they considered the allies' presence in Berlin illegitimate but since it existed they were prepared to discuss access with the Western powers. Should the West find itself confronted one day by a representative of the GDR at the border or in the Air Safety Center, the West should proceed immediately to careful deliberation with the Federal Government. Since the alternative might be the use of force to gain access, it might prove best to accept negotiations on the "technical" problems of access with GDR representatives at the same time expressly denying recognition of the state. Negotiations on these special problems would not set a precedent for negotiations with the GDR on reunification which was an issue of a completely different order and one for which the Soviet Union had fortunately again acknowledged its responsibility in notes of September 18.

Ollenhauer and Menzel spoke of the overriding importance to the USSR of military security considerations and of the deep fear which the Soviet Union had of Germany; and stressed that for this reason reunification seemed to them impossible on the basis of Germany rearmed in NATO. The Soviets could be expected to give strong support to improvement of the economy of the GDR but within the limits set by the level of their own economy. They did not believe that the Soviet Union was embarrassed by international public opinion or moral judgements

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of the rightness or the wrongness of its position in the GDR nor by a possibility of violence arising out of the division of Germany. The Soviets were concerned about their security and would come to a solution of the German problem only in the broader framework of a general security agreement.

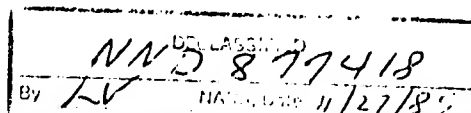
SITUATION IN THE SOVIET ZONE AND INTERPARTY CONSULTATION. Ollenhauer and Menzel noted the possibility that the GDR might use its new authority to limit the refugee flow from the Zone into Berlin but did not think this a primary concern. They had both noted with regret increasingly severe limitations on travel out of the Zone. They also noted the development of a different way of life, a different way of thinking and talking among the Germans of the GDR in contrast to the Germans of the Federal Republic.

Both Ollenhauer and Menzel spoke with great concern about the ever worsening psychological effect of the continued existence of the communist regime in the GDR. They said that as a result of the ideological atmosphere to which everyone living in the GDR is exposed, the way of thinking and the vocabulary even of the great majority who are strongly opposed to communism is being affected. GDR visitors coming to see friends in the Federal Republic tended to use, unconsciously, the communist vocabulary, using as a matter of course, such phrases as "the capitalistic system of the Federal Republic", etc. The younger men who had never known freedom (having lived first under the Nazi and later under the Communist dictatorship) generally had no conception of what freedom is. For example, one recent visitor, himself not a Communist, in arguing with members of the SPD, defended the idea that there is freedom in the "single list" election system in the GDR. He had pointed out that everyone was perfectly free either to vote or not to vote for the single list; and the fact that the voting was not secret was also good because it was more open and straight forward to show publicly where you stand (by voting or not voting for the single list) than it is to have a secret ballot. Menzel pointed out that only those in the age groups over forty had ever experienced what it is to live in a free society; those who had been fifteen years old in 1933 and were now forty, and all younger than they, had always lived under dictatorship.

The SPD continued to believe that the manifold "technical" contacts between the FedRep and the GDR, including contacts at Land level, and even at local (town or village) level in border areas, should be coordinated in order to strengthen contacts with the people of the Soviet Zone and to create a point to which the GDR might be referred (without engaging the Government itself) if it were not possible to continue negotiations at the technical level. The SPD had

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no interest in recognizing the GDR or conducting political negotiations with it.

The CDU raised both constitutional and political objections to the SPD proposal for an office for internal German affairs. The proposal for such a coordinating agency had been the principal subject of deliberation in the interparty group meeting with Minister Lemmer.

of the group with Lemmer

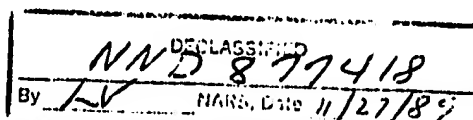
Ollenhauer said that the meeting/scheduled for October 28 had at that time been postponed in view of the uncertainty as to the Federal Republic's reply to the Soviet notes. On the date next suggested for the group to convene, Wehner and Ollenhauer had to be in London. In view of the present international activities it now seemed best to postpone the meeting until the text of the notes to the Soviets was available.

EMERGENCY LEGISLATION AND CDU ATTITUDES. Both men stressed the extremely bad effect and the dangers involved in the tendency of men in Adenauer's Government like Interior Minister Schroeder and Defense Minister Strauss to brand their political opponents, particularly the SPD, as communists or opponents of the state beyond the pale. They referred in this connection to the speech of Strauss in which he said that those who favored the Rapacki Plan were potential war criminals (because by favoring the Rapacki Plan they weakened NATO and thus increased the danger of an outbreak of war), and claimed that Schroeder's use of the term and concept of a Staatssicherheitsdienst (the name of Himmler's security service) showed his "Nazi mentality". Menzel said Schroeder's current efforts are the logical outgrowth of his measures to outlaw the KPD which he had undertaken against the urgent advice of the SPD. The KPD at that time offered no threat to the state and Schroeder's proceedings against the KPD had served only to drive the party underground. Now he finds it necessary to institute new security measures. The SPD cannot support this.

Ollenhauer and Menzel said the clumsiness of Schroeder's Stuttgart speech was probably not intentional but the proposals he made there should have been fully discussed within the cabinet and with the opposition. Presented as they were publicly and with the unfortunate terminology "giving executive authority to the office for protection of the constitution" and its reorganization into a "state security agency", they could not fail to elicit a negative reaction. Menzel went on to say that there was no need for legislation in this field. Under Article 91 of the Basic Law the Laender had competence for maintaining public order if necessary with assistance from each other and, in gravest need, from the Federal Government with its border control forces. Even if the emergency

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legislation were passed the occupation forces would retain the right to take action for their own security and for this reason also new emergency legislation was not necessary and, in the hands of men like Schroeder, was dangerous.

For the Charge d'Affaires ad interim:

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